

Tropical storm remnant soaks Montgomery

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The remnants of Tropical Storm Nicole blew through Montgomery County on Thursday, causing power outages across the county and producing dangerous conditions for drivers throughout the day.

By the time it reached Maryland, the storm had been downgraded to a tropical depression, but the storm still triggered flash flood fears and a severe thunderstorm warning as it dumped several inches of rain over a wide swath of the area.

National Weather Service meteorologist Bryan Jackson said that the county was hit by “a widespread, really soaking rain” and that precipitation tallies “exceeded expectation in some ways.” Jackson said the high totals were caused by a combination of factors that included a “low-pressure system off the coast of Carolina and the remnants of Nicole — sort of a double shot.”

According to Jackson, some of the most drenched parts of the county were White Oak, which received 5.08 inches of rain over the duration of the storm, and Damascus, which received 4.96 inches. However, the highest Montgomery County rain totals were dwarfed by other figures across the state — Jackson said some areas of St. Mary’s County received 12 to 14 inches of rain over the storm period.

More than 11,000 residents lost power during the storm, with most of the outages originating in the early afternoon, according to Pepco spokesman Clay Anderson.

Anderson said Rockville and Silver Spring were hit hardest by power disruptions. An announcement on Montgomery College’s website said the school’s Rockville campus had lost power around 2 p.m. Classes in Rockville were canceled for the rest of the day.

Businesses in Rockville Town Center were also affected by the afternoon outages. A spokesman for the Regal Rockville Center 13 said the movie theater went without power for a couple hours but did not think the outage caused much business disruption. A worker at Rockville Town Center’s Berrycup said the yogurt shop went without power from 1 p.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Assistant Chief Scott Graham of Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service said “a couple of wrecks” but no injuries were reported as a result of the storm.

“It was a pretty benign day,” Graham said.

Department of Parks spokeswoman Kelli Holsendolph said Sligo Creek Parkway was closed “for a bit yesterday in sections because of the weather, but other than that it’s been pretty quiet.”

Angela Cruz, an office services coordinator for the Montgomery County Police Department, said police had not heard of any flooded homes or businesses. However, Cruz said the department received word of three separate road and intersection closures between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. Thursday afternoon. Two closures involved fallen trees, and one affected the eastbound lanes of Maryland Route 28.

Trees were also to blame for at least some of Thursday's power line damage, according to Anderson.

"You still have leaves on the trees, and some of the leaves and branches start to sway ... into the power lines," Anderson said.